

**Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant Increase**

Agency/Program #: 6201-30-I1

Division: Agricultural Sciences

Program:

Agency Name: Department of Agriculture

Agency Contact: Kathy Seacat

444-5408

LFC Contact: Representative Ripley, Representative Erickson

LFD Liaison: Pam Joehler

444-2722

OBPP Liaison: Shawn Graham

444-0054

**Program or Project Description:**

The 2007 Legislature transferred \$5 million general fund to the Noxious Weed Trust Fund in FY 2008, effectively doubling the principal of the trust. The legislature increased state special authority by \$409,136 with the addition of 1.00 FTE in FY 2009 to assist in managing and monitoring an expected increase in the number of grant projects and program costs.

**Appropriation, Expenditure and Source**

Fund Name:	2008		2009		Approp & Expenditure numbers are as of April 15, 2008
	Approp.	Expended	Approp.	Expended	
General Fund					
State Special					
Federal Funds					
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	

**Legislative Goal(s):**

Increase the funding for noxious weed management, research and education projects to help reduce the overall infestation of weeds in Montana.

**Legislative Performance Measures:**

Report the following annually:

1. The number of grant applications received and the number of grant applications funded
2. The dollar amount of grant applications received and the dollar amount funded
3. Percent of state's weed infected acres treated with Noxious Weed Trust Fund grants
4. Summary of the coordinated activities of all parties included in the Montana Weed Management Plan

Information will be provided from 2006 and forward by January each year.

Completion Dates

**2009 Biennium Significant Milestones:**

Target

Actual

1. Hire a new weed grants coordinator by 9/1/08.

1

2. Increase the number of weed grant projects approved in FY 2009 by 24

2

3

4

5

**Agency Performance Report:**

see attached data page

**LFD Narrative:**

LFD ASSESSMENT: On-Track

DATA RELEVANCE: The information reported in the Agency Performance section relates to three of the four legislative performance measures.

APPROPRIATION STATUS: Appropriation and expenditure data were not provided

COMMENTS: The fourth performance measure, the percentage of the state's weed infected acres treated with NWTF grants, can be calculated from the data provided. The agency notes that the number of acres treated with NWTF grants averages 65,000 acres annually, and that 7.4 million acres of Montana's 94 million acres are infested with noxious weeds, making the percentage of the state's weed infected acres treated with NWTF grants 0.88 percent (65,000 divided by 7,400,000).

**OPTIONS:**

- 1) Dismiss from further review
- 2) Review again in October 2008
- 3) Request additional information
- 4) Upgrade or downgrade the rating

**POTENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE:**

- What budget changes are being considered for the 2011 biennium for this program and why?
- What are the next steps in implementation to assure continued positive outcomes?
- Are there any potential obstacles in the near future that may change the course of this initiative or progress towards the goal?
- How is this level of performance going to be sustained?
- Why was this particularly successful?



Version	Date	Author
	5/20/2008	Joehler

Change Description
Added LFD narrative, cut/paste agency info from submitted document

**Performance Measures**  
**Montana Department of Agriculture**  
**Noxious Weed Trust Fund Program**  
**July 1, 2005 through April 30, 2008**

	<u>Grant Applications Received</u>	<u>Grant Applications Funded</u>
FY 2006	155	146
FY 2007	167	159
FY 2008	188	167

	<u>\$ Amount of Grant Applications Received</u>	<u>\$ Amount of Grant Applications Funded</u>
FY 2006	\$4,379,747	\$2,605,825
FY 2007	\$3,625,565	\$2,609,186
FY 2008	\$3,637,677	\$2,637,452

(FY 2007 & FY 2008 were one year applications only. FY 06 was multiple years.)

**Infested Acres Treated With Noxious Weed Trust Fund Dollars**

The Montana Weed Management Plan (MWMP) estimates 7.4 million of Montana's 94 million acres are infested with noxious weeds. The acres treated with Noxious Weed Trust Fund grants on average equal 65,000 acres per year. These efforts combined with integrated weed management projects across the state average 216,000 treated acres per year. The total number of project acres involved in Noxious Weed Trust Fund grants overall total more than 10 million acres per year.

**Coordinated Activities of Parties Included in the Montana Weed Management Plan (MWMP)**

The MWMP is being updated to reflect current accomplishments, budgets, and future needs. The updated MWMP should be completed in May 2008. The MWMP currently describes the following coordinated efforts in weed management.

Approximately 80 Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs) each year are the foundation for effective weed management involving private and public lands in Montana. CWMAs are established for facilitating long term planning and cooperation among all land managers and owners, to manage a common problem and help secure funding for long term management efforts. Federal and state agencies along with County Weed Districts all budget money for weed control to support CWMAs. According to the MWMP, state agencies including Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Montana Department of Transportation, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Montana Department of Agriculture, Montana Department of Corrections, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, University programs and the Noxious Weed Trust Fund have budgets totaling approximately \$6.9 million and Federal agencies including Bureau of Land Management, United States Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation, and United States Agricultural Research Services have agency budgets totaling approximately \$5.2 million to use toward weed management activities. The private landowners involved in CWMAs are essential to the success of a weed management program and also spend approximately \$3 million treating noxious weeds annually.

CWMAs provide an avenue for good communication by the Cooperative Extension Service and County Weed Districts in coordinating local education programs and providing technical assistance and training to private land managers on noxious weed management issues. The Natural Resource Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts also provide technical assistance to private landowners and some financial assistance. The Noxious Weed Trust Fund through the Department of Agriculture provides core financial assistance to help CWMAs start a strong weed management program. Trust Fund grants unite these agencies and landowners to work together to solve jurisdictional conflicts, lack of cost-share funds, and reducing the magnitude of the noxious weed problem.

The commitment to cooperation and communication among state, federal, county and private landowners is on going for long term goal planning in the CWMA. These groups will continue to grow and provide good links between all parties in the CWMA.